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LETTER DATED 28 OCTOBER 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that United States military aircraft and naval vessels have carried out a series of violations and acts of provocation that pose a threat to the sovereignty and security of the Republic of Iraq. Details are as follows:

1. At 1045 hours on 14 October 1997, the United States frigate Rentz (No. 46) positioned itself 500 metres south of Mina' al-Bakr. A United States military helicopter took off from it and hovered over the port for five minutes before returning to the frigate.

2. At 1245 on 14 October 1997, a United States military aircraft violated the airspace over the Umm Qasr region.

3. At 1600 hours on 16 October 1997, when the General Establishment for Iraqi Ports dredger al-Nasr arrived at position 9275, a military helicopter from United States frigate No. 51 hovered above it and ordered it to go to position 8276 in order to be searched. The search operation lasted until 17 October 1997.

4. At 0900 hours on 17 October 1997, the United States frigate Rentz (No. 46) resumed its manoeuvres 700 metres south of Mina' al-Bakr. A helicopter from the frigate hovered over the port for five minutes before returning to the vessel.

5. At 1240 hours and 1310 hours on 17 October 1997, United States military aircraft violated Iraqi airspace over the Umm Qasr region and Mina' al-Bakr.

6. At 1240 hours and 1510 hours on 21 October 1997, United States military aircraft again violated Iraqi airspace over the Umm Qasr region, alarming the civilian population.

Your intervention with the Government of the United States of America is requested, with a view to bringing a halt to such violations, which have been increasing recently with no justification. These acts are violations of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law and pose a threat to the sovereignty and security of the Republic of Iraq.

The Republic of Iraq affirms its right to seek legal compensation for the losses suffered by its citizens as a result of these provocative acts.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative